GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3708
ANSWERED ON:19.04.2005
ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT
Veerendra Kumar Shri M.P.

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any plan to go in for more comprehensive economic co-operation programme;

(b) if so, the areas proposed to be covered;

(c) whether the Preferential Trade Agreement has helped in overcoming non-tariff barriers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN)

(a)&(b): India has signed Framework Agreements for comprehensive economic cooperation with ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) Thailand, and BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) during the year 2003-2004. These Agreements provide for negotiations on preferential market access in the areas of Goods, Services and Investment. India is also negotiating a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement covering Goods, Services and Investment with Singapore and Sri Lanka.

(c)&(d): As on today India is participating in the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) Agreement among developing countries, SAARC Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) among the seven South Asian countries and Bangkok Agreement among India, Bangladesh, China, Sri Lanka, Republic of Korea and Lao Peoples Democratic Republic. These are the regional preferential trading arrangements in force where limited tariff preferences on goods have been exchanged. Though there are provisions for negotiations on both tariff and non-tariff measures, the signatories have limited their negotiations to tariff measures only.